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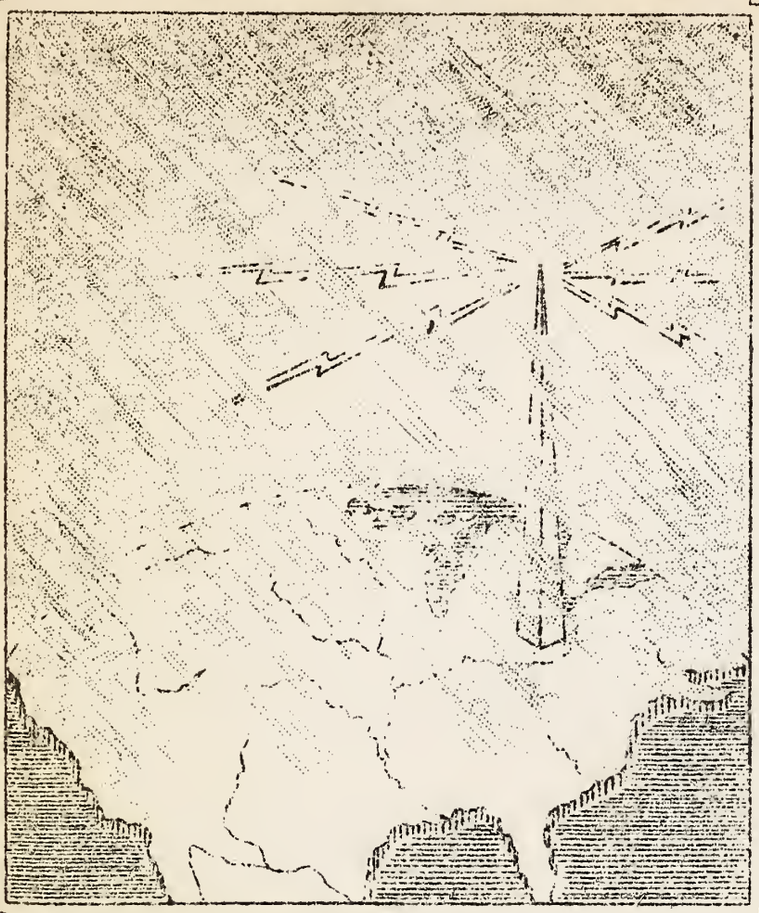

FORTUNES WASHED AWAY

"THE FIRST FARM FORESTRY PROJECT"

Broadcast No. 5 in the third year in a series of dramatizations of better land use

WLW, Cincinnati

May 25, 1940 1:15-1:30 pm.

Soil Conservation Service
U. S. Department of Agriculture
Washington, D. C.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE
DAYTON, OHIO

SOUND: Thunder and rain....

ANNOUNCER

Fortunes Washed Away!

ORGAN THEME: I GET THE BLUES WHEN IT RAINS.

ANNOUNCER

A tree is a friend of man. Go into the deep woods at night. A huge harvest moon in a cloudless sky sends along shafts of light down through the foliage of the forest. The gigantic tulip poplar, the magnificent white oak stand in a solemn hush of attention, their leafy ceiling reaching toward the quiet stars, their roots thrusting into the cool earth, the good earth. These are friendly trees.

ORGAN: Sneak in TREES.

ANNOUNCER

Oh, not every American pioneer appreciated the friendly trees. To many, a wooded section, the virgin forests, glorious in the majesty of their maturity, were a source of wealth, a life-giving commodity. To many another, they were a nuisance that called for "cut out and get out" methods. But -- the trees are coming back.

ORGAN: UP AND OUT.

ANNOUNCER

Jefferson County, Indiana, is pioneering the nation's first farm forestry project. A pioneer of the past, a pioneer of the future, is Willard B. Clashman, who helped his father clear timber 70 years ago....

SOUND: Chopping of axe...pausing.

LAWRENCE

What's the matter, my boy? Tired already?

WILLARD

Of course not! But my hands are getting sore.

LAWRENCE

All right, Willard. We'll rest a bit. I guess these trees will keep.

WILLARD

There must be a million of 'em!

LAWRENCE

A million won't even start it. There's more trees right here in this county than we can ever get rid of. You're only 8 years old, son, but the day will never come when you'll see these forests gone.

WILLARD

Why don't we just burn them off?

LAWRENCE

Some of the settlers are doing that, but not me! We can still get a good price by selling 'em, and then we'll have good corn land. I'm already getting a load of hogs to drive to Cincinnati. Want to go with me?

WILLARD

Sure, father! Cincinnati....that must be a long ways off. Why don't you sell them at Madison?

LAWRENCE

Well, you see, son....Madison isn't the big hog market like it used to be. And it was a big hog market. Big packing plants, big saw-mills. You've heard me and your Uncle Nicholas talk about Bedford and Bloomington, haven't you?

WILLARD

I guess so. I don't remember, though.

LAWRENCE

Many's the time we drove hogs from Bedford, Bloomington, Indianapolis, and Anderson to Madison. In those days, we'd start driving the hogs with just a small drove, picking up others on the way. They'd eat acorns and beech mast as we went along.

WILLARD

Did you eat acorns, too?

LAWRENCE (laughing)

Of course not! But I'll admit, there were times when we almost did. It took about two months to make the trip. We had wagons follow us, to pick up the hogs that got too tired to walk. Well, there wasn't any competition at Madison. The packing houses bought the hogs at their own price in Madison, and there wasn't anything we could do about it.

WILLARD

Why didn't you horse-whip 'em? That'd make 'em learn not to cheat you.

LAWRENCE

Listen, my lad....when you've driven a drove of hogs through the woods for two months, you're glad to get what money you can get and be done with it. Still...it was that price-fixing that drove the hog business away from Madison to Cincinnati.

WILLARD

Gee....Cincinnati. Will we go in a wagon?

LAWRENCE

You'll go in a wagon, Willard. But I warn you, you'll have to help drive the hogs. It's a long way to Cincinnati, my lad.

ORGAN: OMINOUS CHORD and out.

ANNOUNCER

1880!

SOUND: Chopping of axe, slowly, with tree crashing...

ANNOUNCER

1890!

SOUND: Chopping of axe, faster, with tree crashing...

ANNOUNCER

1900!

SOUND: Chopping of axe, rapidly, with tree crashing..

ANNOUNCER

1910!

SOUND: Buzz-saw sawing logs, up, then fade out completely, fade in gentle rain, hold, then fade out into complete silence.

ANNOUNCER

Willard Clashman, as well as his nephews Howard and Sam, were raised in that community. Last week, as Willard Clashman drove up to Sam's house for a friendly visit....

SOUND: Car pulling to halt, car door opens and slams....

HAZEL (off mike)

Sam! Here's Uncle Willard now.

SAM (off mike)

Be with you in a minute.

CLASHMAN (fading in)

Hazel, what I want to know is, what's the big idea of hurrying me over here?

HAZEL

Why, don't you know? Today's your birthday!

CLASHMAN

My birthday....why, I'll be hog-tied! If that don't beat a hen a-peckin'.

HAZEL

And you're 78!

CLASHMAN

So I am. Hope you didn't bake a cake. 78 Candles would darn near burn the house down.

SOUND: Door opens and closes...

SAM

Hello, Uncle.

CLASHMAN

Hello, Sam. What's all the fuss about, just because a man has a birthday?

SAM

Oh, it was Hazel's idea. Howard'll be here later. Right now he's over at Deputy highschool, working with some of the boys on one of his conservation projects. I'll tell you, Howard's gone conservation-crazy.

CLASHMAN

I reckon it's in his blood. It's in all of ours, for that matter. Look at you, Sam...you've done more to treat your woods right than any other man I ever knew.

SAM

Except maybe you.

HAZEL

Sam got that bug on the Hawaiian Island, Uncle Willard. You know he spent ten years over there teaching American problems, and if you ever read the stuff he wrote you know that conservation was one of the biggest.

SAM

It's one of the biggest over there, too, Uncle. Hawaii is mostly agricultural, and they have plenty of need for soil conservation over there.

CLASHMAN

There's plenty of need for it over here, too. My....when I think back over the years...(suddenly) Hazel! I hope you're not going to have turkey for dinner.

HAZEL (with surprise)

Why, no...I'd planned on roast pork, and...but don't you like turkey?

CLASHMAN

Listen, when I was a boy, we ate so much wild turkey that I got tired of it, and I don't ever want to see turkey on the table again. Turkeys..wild ones, that is, why in those days...and I knew one man who had two feather mattresses made out of pigeon feathers.

HAZEL

Tell us about those days, Uncle Willard. I don't want to serve dinner until Howard gets here.

CLASHMAN

Not much to tell. This land was all big poplar and walnut and hickory then. I hear it was the outstanding white oak region of the world. Howard says you can still read about it in English histories. And it was a fox hound country, even then..(chuckling)

SAM

Now what's so funny, Uncle?

CLASHMAN

I was just thinking about an old sale bill I saw once. This man was selling fox hounds. He had them listed by name, even telling what kind of voices they had! (all laugh)

SAM (soberly)

I wish we had the trees now that we had then.

CLASHMAN

You're off to a good start, Sam. Just keep handling your woodlands like they ought to be handled.

SAM

I'm trying to. I've already got the crooked and diseased trees cut out, and I'm gonna saw 'em for firewood. Next thing I've got to do is fence the trees off so the livestock can't get in.

CLASHMAN

Smart boy. I remember one time we tried an experiment. We let some of the hogs feed in the woods. When it came butchering time, their fat was just awful poor. We had some other hogs that we fed on corn, and by George, their fat was just as solid as everything. And, of course, you know what the hogs did to the young trees in the woods.

SAM

I know, from experience.

HAZEL

Uncle Willard, were there any deer around these parts when you were a boy?

CLASHMAN

I never saw any, but I've seen their tracks. Some folks say that my father killed the last deer.

HAZEL

Any bear?

CLASHMAN

I guess there were. I was talking to Uncle Ed Earhart the other day about that, and he was telling me a story....

SAM

It must have been a good one. When he gets started....

CLASHMAN

Ed says that once some of the boys wanted him to go bear hunting with them. But he said, "no sir, I ain't lost any bears." (all laugh)

ORGAN: Sneak in TREES.

CLASHMAN

Those were great days. We had plenty of trees. Now we haven't got enough. We look at the land and say, "there's a strip of good timber." But we don't see many good strips of good timber. I've seen the forests of the past. I may not live to see the forests of the future. But come over to my place, and I'll show you the beginnings of those forests. I'm planting trees on land that should be in trees. I don't guess I'll ever rest under their shade. I don't guess I'll ever eat any of their fruit. But still, I'm planting trees.

ORGAN: UP AND OUT.

ANNOUNCER

That is the true story of the Clashman family of Jefferson County, Indiana, pioneers in the nation's pioneering farm forestry project. And now, once again we turn to the Soil Conservation Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, and here is Ewing Jones.

JONES

Thanks, _____. By way of background, let me explain that these farm forestry projects are being set up in various parts of the country by the Soil Conservation Service to work with farmers in showing them how to get the most profit out of their woodlands, by demonstrating such good woodland management practices as selective cutting, reforestation, protection from grazing and fire -- and, of course, fire control is a big part of the program. Now, for more background, I'm going to call on Joe DeYoung, a New York forester who went to Tennessee from Syracuse, and ended up at Madison in charge of the farm forestry project there. Between Joe and J. G. Zimmerman, they've got trees practically sprouting all over Jefferson and Ripley counties...or have you, Joe?

DeYOUNG

Not yet, Ewing, but give us time. Rome wasn't built in a single day...someone said that before me...but give us time. We're off to a good start.

JONES

For instance....

DeYOUNG

Indiana was the first state to establish these farm forestry projects in cooperation with the Soil Conservation Service. Jefferson county held the first farm forestry tour. The first farm forestry agreement was signed with....

JONES

Willard B. Clashman?

DeYOUNG

NO, because he got shoved out of line by John L. Sample, who is president of the farm forestry committee. John, by the way, is one of the best boosters we have.

JONES

But not the only one, I hope, I hope...

DeYOUNG

Ewing, did you ever hear of Willard B. Clashman?

JONES

Well, now that you mention it....

DeYOUNG

Here he is, Willard Clashman, who celebrated his 78th birthday last week.

JONES

All I can say is, Mr. Clashman, we appreciate the time you've taken to come to Cincinnati...not to drive hogs with your father, but to give us your ideas about farm forestry.

CLASHMAN

All I can say Mr. Jones, is that I'm glad to do anything I can to promote the idea. I've seen what destruction of the forests has done to our country, and I want to do my share to make up for it.

JONES

And you were 78 years old last week?

CLASHMAN

Yes, but you've got the wrong idea about that birthday party. We went over to Sam's and Hazel's, but we didn't do any celebrating. I spent most of the day looking over the land, trying to figure out the best way to improve the soil.

JONES

Has the land changed so much?

CLASHMAN

It certainly has. We cut down the trees. Now, there's one field near my farm -- it's between mine and Howards. I remember when it grew the best corn and wheat and red clover. When it came time to plant corn, we all used to get our hoes and go out there and work together. It raised fine crops. Now look at it - briars and broomsedge.

JONES

Well, I guess we've all learned a lesson.

CLASHMAN

I know I have. The trouble with this country is that the smart boys went away to school, and left us dumb ones here and we ruined the land.

JONES

From what I've heard, Mr. Clashman, you're far from being one of those "dumb" ones as you put it. Joe DeYoung tells me you're about the best conservation farmer in Lancaster township.

CLASHMAN

I won't say that. Howard may be county superintendent of schools, but he's a leader in conservation work. Sam taught school I don't know how many years, but he's a real conservation farmer. And don't let me give the impression that the Clashman family is the only one that's doing anything.

JONES

Oh, of course not.

CLASHMAN

Men like John Sample are helping us. County Agent L.P.Geyer is behind us and working with us. It's even reaching the schools. You should read the essay that Robert Gray, a 13-year old boy from Deputy highschool, has written about the need for conservation. And, that's about all I have to say.....

JONES

Before you go, Mr. Clashman, I wish you'd tell us one more story about the early days.

CLASHMAN

Looks like all I've been doing is telling stories. Well, I like fishing.

JONES

Who doesn't?

CLASHMAN

When I was 7 years old, I started to go fishing, and I started to cut a poplar sapling for a fishing pole. Something happened -- I don't remember now -- but I didn't get away, and that little sapling was saved. It was cut down during the war, in 1918. It made 5 logs, each one of 'em from 10 to 12 feet long. The butt log was 2 feet thick. I think that shows you what farm forestry can mean if the trees are handled in the right way.

JONES

I'll think a long time before I cut another sapling ,Mr. Clashman. I don't ever catch any fish anyhow. But on behalf of all conservationists, I want to thank Mr. Willard B. Clashman, 78-year old conservation farmer of Jefferson County, Indiana. And Joe DeYoung, our farm forester, you'll be held responsible if Mr. Clashman doesn't get back to Madison tonight in time to go out in the back pasture and look at those new locust plantings of his -- friendly trees to hold this soil.

ORGAN THEME: I GET THE BLUES WHEN IT RAINS..

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